



Advisory Committee on Healthcare Innovation & Evaluation (ACHIEv)

Meeting Minutes for January 23, 2025

Virtual Meeting occurred via Zoom

Members Present

David Folweiler, DC | Chair
John Meier | Vice Chair
Kirk Harmon, MD
Louis Lim, MD
Laurie Gwerder, ARNP
Tricia Daniel
Nicole Gomez
Jane Dale
Lloyd Brooks

Members Not Present

Andrew Friedman, MD
Kelly Golob, DC
Sybill Hyppolite

L&I Staff & Presenters

Gary Franklin
Kim Wallace
Karen Jost
Brenda Heilman
Cherell Fisher
Knowrasa Patrick
Charla Treise
Angelique Guppy
Diana Drylie
Jennine Griffio
Amy Updike
Jason Fodeman
Morgan Young
Azadeh Farokhi
Jennifer Jutte
Shawn Apperson

Zach Gray
Jami Lifka
Bree Jackson
Athena Hightower
Brooke Allan-Davis
Emily Stinson
Megan Lemon
Aaron Hoffman
Jessica Radcliff
Cristy Miller
Daniel Aguilera
Jessica Sullivan
Paulina Luke
Tiffany Meeks
Victoria Rich
Todd Bishopp

Espen Pyrtek
Zach Mills



Welcome & Virtual Meeting Tips (David Folweiler & Kim Wallace)

Introductions

ACHIEv Chair David Folweiler called the meeting to order and led introductions. Kim Wallace introduced L&I participants. David reviewed a few key features of Governor Ferguson's 2025-2027 budget proposal with a focus on possible impacts to this committee.

Review & Approve Agenda

Committee members reviewed and approved the January 23, 2025 ACHIEv agenda with no changes.

Approve Meeting Minutes from October 24, 2024 Meeting

Committee members reviewed and approved the October 24, 2024 ACHIEv meeting minutes with no changes.

Safety Tip

David Folweiler reviewed the safety tip on the hazards of prolonged sitting.

Continuation of Priority Topic

"Getting the worker the most appropriate care and return to work as quickly as possible"

Self-Insurance Program Presentation (Knowrasa Patrick)

Knowrasa presented an overview of self-insurance in WA workers' compensation and the Self-Insurance Program at L&I, emphasizing that self-insured workers are entitled to the same benefits as state fund workers. The Self-Insurance Program consists of a claims unit, compliance unit and policy unit. Committee members raised questions about handling claim disputes and managing challenging self-insurance claim and employer issues. It was also noted that L&I has a project underway aimed at exploring and developing the relationship between Centers of Occupational Health and Education (COHE) and self-insured employers and workers. There will be a presentation and discussion about this project at the May 2025 committee meeting.



Updates

Legislative (Karen Jost)

Karen provided an update on new legislation and rulemaking changes for the year. Key updates included the removal of the PA payment differential under WAC 296-20-12501, enabling psychologists to serve as Attending Providers (AP) for mental health-only claims, and an update on the IME co-recording rules. Additionally, a 3rd party recording pilot for IMEs is set to launch on March 1, 2025.

Agency Update (Kim Wallace)

Kim provided an agency update, noting that Joel Sacks has been re-appointed by Governor Ferguson as director of L&I. This is welcome news in that it provides significant continuity and support for the committee's work. Additionally, a state-wide spending freeze has been implemented, which will lead to more "virtual" meetings in the near term. Other impacts are unknown at this time.

PTSD Update (Jennifer Jutte)

Jennifer provided an update on the PTSD project, which is currently in Phase 1. MasDyne Research has been contracted to evaluate PTSD workers' compensation benefits and policies across various jurisdictions. The IIMAC PTSD subcommittee has been meeting monthly since August 2024 and aims to publish PTSD Clinical Guidelines by Fall 2025. Additionally, the WCAC PTSD subcommittee has held three quarterly meetings since June 2024 and continues to identify opportunities to improve outcomes for workers diagnosed with PTSD.

Insurance Services Operational Health Dashboard (Brenda Heilman)

Brenda presented data from the Insurance Services Operational Health Dashboard, highlighting key trends. The data show improvements in filling claim manager vacancies, the number of new time loss claims remaining stable, and growth in medical costs. Especially noteworthy, there is a somewhat persistent increase in long-term disability metrics. The department is actively investigating this concerning trend and is planning to take action to slow or reverse the increase.



Provider Support and Outreach (PSO) Provider Survey (Espen Pyrttek, Bree Jackson, Zack Mills)

Espen presented an overview of the Provider Support and Outreach survey project, including its goal of conducting proactive outreach to enable the creation of a stakeholder engagement report.

Bree asked the committee what providers should know before they start treating workers' compensation patients, and several suggestions were provided. These included educating providers on the benefits of staying at work, offering basic training on clinical best practices, explaining the difference between state fund and self-insured claims, outlining the process for adding a contested condition to a claim, and clarifying claim timelines. David Folweiler requested that the Provider Support Outreach team compile these suggestions and present them at a future meeting.

Interpretation Services Follow Up (Cristy Miller)

Cristy provided an update on interpreter services, noting that SOSi's on-demand telephonic interpretation was launched on January 2nd. It was emphasized that all providers must be registered before using the service. The onboarding of providers and interpreters continues to increase with time and completed appointment numbers are also increasing.

Continuation of Priority Topic (David Folweiler)

"Getting the worker the most appropriate care and return to work as quickly as possible"

David asked the members to share their views on the value of ACHIEv to ensure the department is clear and supportive as budget planning, including possible reductions, occurs. Goals for 2025 were outlined, including following up on COHE's successes, gaining more access to shared data, potentially establishing a single data warehouse to help identify barriers to care, updating the provider directory and online tools for finding a provider, and increasing access and services for workers with catastrophic injuries.

Public Comment (David Folweiler)

None.

Meeting Wrap-Up (David Folweiler)

Meeting Debrief



The committee members agreed that the meeting was productive, with an engaging agenda that sparked meaningful discussion. The next meeting is scheduled for May 8, 2025.

Agenda Requests for May 2025

Agenda topic requests included Data and AI, and COHE follow-up.